

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
Park and Recreation Department
Conference Room, 11th Floor, City Hall
Monday, October 18, 2004
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Bob Aldrich, June Bailey, Dennis Brunner, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, Janet Miller

Absent: Bobbie Harris

Also Present: Don Arnold –John T. Arnold & Associates; Scott Wadle - Wichita-Sedgwick Metropolitan Area Planning Department (MAPD); and Doug Kupper, Larry Foos, Mike North and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the September 13, 2004, Regular Meeting were reviewed and approved as amended.

PUBLIC AGENDA

No items.

REGULAR AGENDA

President Bailey explained that there had been a request to change the order of the agenda to take up the Pathways 2004 Report item before the item on the 2005-2014 Capital Improvement Program. In addition, staff had requested that an Off-Agenda-Item be added regarding water spray parks.

On motion by Dey, second by Miller, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to make the requested changes to the agenda.

1. **Easement Request – Don Arnold, John T. Arnold & Associates.** Don Arnold, John T. Arnold & Associates, passed out a copy of the minutes of the April 14, 2003, Park Board Meeting, with attached map, showing where the Board had voted to grant an easement for construction of an entrance/exit driveway to a church that was, at that time, going to be constructed adjacent to parkland south of 13th Street across from Sedgwick County Park, known as Area A, Country Acres “B” Fourth Addition.

Mr. Arnold explained that although constructing a church on the property was no longer the intent, he said the Midian Shrine had received a “Conditional Use Permit” (CUP) from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) to build a Midian Shrine Temple on the property. He requested that the Board re-affirm their motion to include community and non-profit organizations in the easement grant.

M.S. Mitchell asked if a public access easement could be discussed as part of the easement consideration. Director Kupper stated that Mr. Arnold would need to answer that question. Bob Aldrich stated that possible connection of the two park properties, right-of-way and encroachments onto parkland were also issues that needed to be addressed.

Don Arnold suggested that the City send letters to the property owners who had encroached onto park property in the area. He commented that the Shrine held public hearings for the CUP and that as part

of the negotiations with the Country Acres neighborhood; they had agreed not to support a bike path through the area, either along the West or East (adjacent to the lake) section of the property.

There was discussion concerning changing the easement to a public access easement to prevent further blockage through the area in the future. President Bailey said the Board had agreed to try to establish a connecting pathway between the two park properties that would eventually become part of a trail to Central. She added that the trail idea was part of the Park and Open Space Master Plan that had been adopted by the City.

Responding to a question, Director Kupper commented that both park properties combined totaled approximately 4 acres (3.40 for the south parcel and .68 for the north parcel). He suggested that if the Board granted the easement, that they make it a requirement that the property owner maintain all 4 acres of parkland; or, make it a condition of the easement to allow Park Department personnel to cross the property to perform maintenance activities, instead of using the drainage ditch for access to the property.

Don Arnold commented that there was a utility easement on the west side of the property. Bob Aldrich asked where the City stood on the encroachment issue. Director Kupper commented that once the easement issue had been settled, the City would notify the residents about removing their property from parkland.

Dennis Brunner suggested that the Board approach the Shrine about using the "Adopt-a-Park" program on the issue of maintenance of the two park parcels. He said that way there is a written agreement on mowing and other maintenance. Director Kupper suggested the Board might want to make that a condition of their motion.

Janet Miller asked M.S. Mitchell to explain what happened at the MAPC meeting on the issue. M.S. Mitchell briefly explained that the Shrine had originally agreed to a 30-foot accesses easement on the west side of the property for a pathway; however, due to neighborhood opposition, they withdrew that offer. He also mentioned that when the CUP came before the City Council, there was some confusion, and the Council removed the easement for the pathway from the CUP requirements based on the recommendation of the Council Member from District V.

Don Arnold commented that the Shrine had no problem with allowing park staff access to the park property for maintenance purposes. However, if the Park Board grants a public access easement, it will look like the Shrine backed out on their promise to the neighborhood. There was brief discussion concerning the different types of easements -- maintenance versus public access. Don Arnold also asked about the "level" of maintenance that was required under an "Adopt-a-Park" agreement. Bob Aldrich mentioned that most park areas are currently on a 28-day mowing cycle.

President Bailey said the Board had several options. She mentioned vacating both pieces of parkland, or developing the parcels, as previously requested by the Country Acres neighborhood. She said she would prefer to see the property developed because she didn't want the City to lose the green space. There was discussion regarding a maintenance easement being used for public access. Don Arnold asked if the City granted a maintenance easement, who would stop anyone from walking, biking or skating on it.

Janet Miller said the Board needed to decide whether they wanted to keep the parcels for park purposes; if not, then there was no reason to keep them and they should be abandoned. She said she didn't see the point of the Park Department taking care of land that could not be used by the public.

President Bailey asked if there were any public comments on the issue. The following individuals spoke:

- Nancy Boewe – said she supported the idea of a trail between 13th Street and Central.
- Rosemary Weber, GreenWay Alliance - said she didn't like to see the Park Department give up any parkland. She suggested the possibility of having another discussion with the neighborhood regarding the pathway. She said that way they could be reminded of their previous desire to have the parcels developed as parks.

There was discussion concerning the utility easement along the west side of the property; ownership of the parcels (staff reported that the area was platted in the 1970's as drainage and park); type of grass planted on the parcels; the map showing development of the south parcel with a soccer and softball field; and the possibility of selling the parcels to the Shrine. President Bailey said the Shrine did not want the parcels and the land was not needed for construction of their building. She asked if the Board did not recommend the easement, would Arnold need to come back and ask for vacation of the property. Don Arnold commented that he would like the Board to change the wording of the original motion. Janet Miller stated that if the parcels were kept as parkland, public access would be needed.

On motion by Miller, second by Bob Aldrich, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to allow an easement across the north park parcel provided the City received a 20 foot public access easement, separate from the existing utility easement, along the west or east side of the property to connect Area A (the north parcel) and Area C (the south parcel) in County Acres Fourth "B" Addition.

2. **Review and Discussion of the Pathways 2004 Report, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department.** Scott Wadle, Wichita-Sedgwick Metropolitan Area Planning Department (MAPD), provided board members a handout, which was a summary of the "Pathways 2004 Report" that was distributed with the agenda. Mr. Wadle commented that there were no inventories of trail use in the City, so the Pathways Report was undertaken to verify that people were actually using the trails in and around Wichita and to try to establish patterns of use. He said the purpose of the report was to provide the community with statistics and facts concerning area trail use and to better enable community representatives to make informed decisions concerning pathways.

Mr. Wadle explained the survey methodology commenting that eight sites were selected for observation based on known or expected trail use and limited route options (avoiding forks in the road, etc). He referred board members to a map of the eight observation locations. He said there were three different observation periods at each location during the week, which were morning, lunchtime, and early evening; and one observation time on the weekend, which was in the late afternoon/early evening. He said the observation times were based on survey information from other communities. He continued by saying that trail use was recorded by types of activity including bicycling, walking, jogging and roller-blading; direction of travel; and helmet use by cyclists.

Mr. Wadle provided the following highlights. Five hundred and forty-two (542) trail users were observed during the 72 hours in June, July and August, 2004. He said the greatest number of users per hour was observed during the weekday afternoon observation period (4:00 – 6:00 p.m.). He said locations with the greatest use were Central Arkansas River Trail (114 users) and the K-96 Trail (108 users). He said trail locations with the least amount of use were the Arkansas River Trail – South (52 users), Gypsum Creek Trail (52 users), and Grove Park to Chisholm Park Trail (18 users); however, he mentioned that the Grove Park to Chisholm Park Trail was still under construction. He also mentioned that there were adverse weather conditions on several of the observation days. He referred to a chart entitled “Trail Use Type For All Time Periods”. He said types of trail use broke down as follows: 49% cyclists; 33% walkers; 16% joggers; and 2% roller-bladders.

Mr. Wadle commented that Wichita trails were being used and the trail use appeared to be comparable to other Midwest communities. He said continued observation of trail use was needed to establish observable trends (hourly, daily, and annually) and to normalize weather conditions and other variables. He said future surveys would attempt to discover why trail use discrepancies existed.

Dennis Brunner commented on the low use of the Sedgwick County Park Trail and stated that most of the trail use was on the West edge of the park and along 21st St. Mr. Wadle stated that the observation point may need to be relocated at Sedgwick County Park. There was brief discussion concerning comparisons with other communities; however, Mr. Wadle commented that it was difficult to compare with some communities because they had different observation times and different observation methods. As an example, he said one group stationed observers along one trail system; therefore, one individual could have been counted several times as he traversed the entire pathway. Glen Dey mentioned that he felt trail signage was an issue that needed to be addressed. Mr. Wadle agreed citing comments from several trail users he encountered. He said the trail system in general could use a lot of improvement.

President Bailey asked if there were any public comments on the issue. The following individuals spoke:

- Nancy Boewe – asked about bike route signs on streets. Scott Wadle said the signs had been removed because of legal liability. She commented that she knew where one sign was still located.
- Rosemary Weber, GreenWay Alliance - commented that she wanted to know about bike trail maintenance. She said pathway maintenance was almost non-existent. She said she felt the City needed to take care of the paths they currently had before building more trails. She said there is glass on trails; trails were “washed out” after rain; and she also mentioned the six-inch cracks on the K-96 trail. She concluded by saying that the trails were not well maintained.

There was discussion concerning maintenance funding for pathways. President Bailey asked if maintenance costs were incorporated into any of the federal trail grants. Scott Wadle said maintenance funds were not included in federal grants; only project construction costs. He suggested that the “Adopt-a-Trail” program might be a way to fund trail maintenance. Rosemary Weber explained that the “Adopt-a-Trail” program consisted of volunteers providing trash pick up. Janet Miller asked if the CIP program covered pathway maintenance or was it considered part of the park maintenance budget.

Director Kupper commented that pavement was Public Work's responsibility and cleanliness, edging and mowing were the responsibility of the Park Department. There was brief discussion concerning the design of the K-96 pathway in the Chisholm Creek Park section and how it lacked a sub-based structure. Bob Aldrich asked at what point the City stopped expanding trails and bike paths. Director Kupper commented on quality of life issues being addressed by the Visioneering Wichita document. He said one of the questions being asked was "how do you take care of amenities". Bob Aldrich said at some point the City needed to take care of what is already built before expanding any more.

3. **Review and Discussion of the 2005-2014 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**. Director Kupper referred board members to the CIP Survey and Workbook provided with the agenda. He commented that the survey had been distributed to the District Advisory Boards (DAB's) and other boards and commissions and that it was also on line on the City's WEB page. He briefly reviewed the survey including the questions: 1) Which recent projects have made the biggest difference in your District (within the last five years); 2) Which projects are most important to you; and, 3) List future projects that need to be done.

Janet Miller asked if the survey should be filled out from a Park Board Member point of view. Director Kupper commented that it could be from either a citizen at large or board member point of view. Janet Miller also asked for clarification on future projects and whether the most important projects should be considered within the next year or the next ten years. Director Kupper commented that any future projects meant projects that were not currently in the CIP and should include projects over the next ten years of the program.

Colleen Craig asked for clarification on the different funding sources. Director Kupper explained that GO meant General Obligation Funds; LST meant federal transportation funds; and that OTHER could be private donations, matches by not-for profit groups, or funds from some other source. Glen Dey asked about completing park projects with Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG). Director Kupper explained that CDBG funds were used to complete several park projects, but that those were not listed on the CIP sheet.

Janet Miller asked about the following projects: \$400,000 for Fairmount Park - Director Kupper explained that was for the water spray park/interactive fountain. \$400,000 Park Facilities Renovation - Director Kupper explained that was for a variety of renovations and purchases including, but not limited to: gym floors, basketball goals, the purchase of new chairs, game tables, picnic tables and picnic benches. \$300,000 for the South Arkansas River Greenway - Director Kupper stated that was for development of the canoe launch. \$300,000 for Watson Park - Director Kupper commented that was for the new entry drive off of McLean, expansion of the railroad and stabilization of the lake banks.

Bob Aldrich asked if the relocation of the playground equipment at Orchard Park was still on schedule for fall. Director Kupper responded yes. Bob Aldrich also asked why Schweiter Park was not on the list. Director Kupper explained that the Schweiter tennis court renovation would be covered under the general heading of "Athletic Courts". Janet Miller also mentioned possible use of funds under line 11, Enhancement Projects, for the Schweiter project.

Dr. Dey provided board members a handout, which was page 150 of the 2005-2006 Proposed Budget, Debt Service and Capital Improvements, which showed that Parks received 4% of the total

\$1,509, 431,000 budget. He said that was approximately \$5.3 million a year, or \$53 million over the ten-year program. Bob Aldrich requested that staff provide a brief description of each project. It was generally agreed that staff had provided project “cut sheets” previously, but could provide them again if needed.

Dr. Dey clarified that the 4% CIP funding Parks received did not include maintenance funding. Director Kupper commented that was correct. There was discussion concerning lack of maintenance funding, including additional maintenance personnel to keep up with various road projects such as the Kellogg and Oliver interchange and other areas along Kellogg.

Dr. Dey expressed frustration and mentioned that there was a problem with GO funding for park projects. He made the following recommendations, which he felt would create a more adequate base for park CIP projects:

- 1) Funding for a long-range planning study to establish a specific plan to implement the development of current Park and Recreation facilities – including a coordinated effort with Sedgwick County in the acquisition of future parkland available to Wichita and Sedgwick County residents. He said this would build on the 1998 Wichita Parks and Recreation Facilities Study. He said without a coherent plan it was difficult to set goals and evaluate progress in meeting those goals. He said Visioneering groups ranked quality of life, including parks and greenways as a high priority.
- 2) Fund a process to identify Parks and Recreation as an “essential public facility” to enhance the goals outlined in Item #1. He said this would provide more equity for funding and efforts to establish a process for identifying and siting of essential public facilities including parks, greenways and pathways. He said respondents to the survey in the 1998 study indicated that linking the parks by pathways was the highest priority.
- 3) Fund a pathways pathfinding and traffic signage best design study to develop a comprehensive plan involving representatives of bicycle clubs, neighborhood associations and relevant city and/or county departments.

President Bailey asked if there were any comments from the public. The following individual spoke:

- John Stevens, Schweiter Neighborhood Association (SNA) – provided board members a draft of the “Visioneering Wichita” document. He referred to item III - Quality of Life, B.1. Recreation/Arts and Culture. He commented that the section made a point about parks; the need for them and the need for higher levels of service. He added that the comments under VI – Government and V – Infrastructure also related to the need for parks and park stewardship.

Mr. Stevens commented that the SNA would like to apply for grant funding to help with park development; however, they were having difficulty clarifying the budget that had been set aside for improvements at Schweiter Park. He concluded by stating that Councilman Brewer had offered the services of the District I grant writer at Atwater Neighborhood Center. He asked the Park Department for further assistance with the project.

4. **Spray Park Design Review.** Larry Foos, Superintendent of Recreation, reviewed the item stating that spray parks were scheduled to be constructed in Fairmount and Osage Parks. He said staff had

presented three different themed spray park designs to the DAB's for review and recommendation. He referred board members to drawings of the various designs explaining the features of each. He said the concept was a 6,000 square foot water spray park with passive areas for younger children and more active areas for older children.

Mr. Foos said both groups voted unanimously for a combination of the second theme of the "world" with design and art elements from the third option. He said the design consisted of a 2,000 square foot active spray area and a 4,000 square foot passive spray area.

President Bailey asked if the spray nozzles were equal in pressure. Mr. Foos commented that each nozzle could be adjusted. Mr. Foos also provided a sample of the proposed shade structures to be installed at each location. Bob Aldrich asked about installation of water cannons. Mr. Foos said those were not part of the design. He referred board members to maps of the parks and indicated where the spray features would be installed at each park. He commented that each unit would have a 4,000-gallon water storage tank and that although there were currently no national water treatment standards; staff was working with the Environmental Health Division and had decided to adopt the "California" standards.

Bob Aldrich asked who determines where water parks are located. Director Kupper indicated that when the pool closed at Fairmount in 1992, the City told the neighborhood that some other type of water feature would be installed. He also mentioned that the pool was failing at Osage. Responding to Mr. Aldrich's question about costs, Director Kupper commented that the average cost of the spray parks was \$400,000 each; however, he added that spray parks were more economical to operate than pools and cited lower water, electrical, and personnel costs since no lifeguards were necessary. Mr. Foos added that spray parks could be opened earlier and closed later than pools. He concluded by stating that both spray parks should be completed by June, 2005.

Glen Dey suggested showing the Fairmount Park design to Wichita State University. Director Kupper said staff would invite them to the next meeting. There was brief mention of a mix-up on the meeting with the Fairmount Neighborhood Association.

On motion by Aldrich, second by Dey, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY that the Board concurred with the DAB's design choice for the two water spray parks.

5. **Director's Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:

- **Spray Park/Interactive Water Feature Proposed Signage.** Director Kupper passed out examples of signage ideas currently being reviewed and discussed by staff for possible installation at water feature parks, particular Central Riverside. At the duck pond one possible sign was "*WILDLIFE CAN SWIM, WILD PEOPLE CAN WATCH*". Janet Miller said she appreciated the attempt at humor to get the point across, as opposed to the usual "NO SWIMMING" signs.
- **Garvey Park.** Reported that work was progressing on schedule at Garvey Park, including installation of the boat launch and parking lot.
- **Watson Park and South Arkansas River Greenway.** Reported that work on river access and parking lots was occurring at these sites. He mentioned the new entry drive off of McLean Boulevard into Watson Park and the possibility of expanding the existing railroad at the park. He

commented that if there was any excess funding or the railroad could not be expanded, there were plans to rebuild the bridge and stabilize the lake banks.

Janet Miller commented that it was embarrassing to read about park projects in the paper before board members knew about them. Director Kupper commented that improvements to Watson Park were in the CIP budget before he arrived. It was the general consensus of the Board that in the future, staff would report in January on all CIP projects due to be initiated that year.

- Location of Skateboard Park. Colleen Craig asked for clarification on the location of the skateboard park. Director Kupper reported that it would be located between St. Francis and Emporia beneath the Kellogg Fly Over. He added that staff should have the final bid documents on the park sometime in November.
- Land Water and Conservation Fund Land (LWCF) Swaps. Director Kupper reported that the City should have the deed to the Old Linwood School November 1. President Bailey asked if staff planned to have a dedication ceremony for the multi-purpose building. Director Kupper stated that no dedication was planned at this time.

Bob Aldrich asked about the status of the fence construction at Linwood School. President Bailey commented that she had invited the children who would be working on the art designs for the columns to bring their designs to the Board for review and comment. She said she thought it would be a good experience for the kids. Director Kupper added that the School Board had decided to use the poured in place surfacing for the playground.

- Concert in Central Riverside Park. M.S. Mitchell reported that the Shrine Band concert in Central Riverside Park on Saturday, October 16, from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. at Celebration Plaza was a success with between 150-300 people attending. There was discussion concerning electrical needs for that type of performance.

Bob Aldrich asked about the possibility of hosting the same type of event at Orchard Park. Director Kupper commented that staff could probably provide the power needed for such an event; however, they also wanted to be sensitive to the neighbors. He said that was one of the reasons why Central Riverside Park was such an ideal location for concerts. Janet Miller added that the Riverside Citizens Association had a “Park Use Task Force” which regularly scheduled concerts and other activities in Riverside.

6. Executive Session.

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY that the Board recess into executive session for consultation with legal counsel on matters privileged in the attorney-client relationship relating to Ordinance #125 and that the Board return from executive session in approximately ten minutes at 5:50 p.m.

The Board returned from executive session at approximately 5:55 p.m. No action was necessary as a result of the executive session.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

June Bailey, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary